

The Art of Mental Training

Chapter 8

The Mental Warrior

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I saw a flash of silver as he drew his gun from behind the small of his back. My gun already drawn, I was behind cover. He was stuck out in the open; I had a clear line of fire. He looked about forty years old, with dark, deep-sunken eyes—he looked every bit the criminal he was. I had tracked and chased him down. With my team not far behind he was now cornered. The adrenaline surged inside my body. Twenty feet away was a fugitive felon with a gun in his hand thinking about using it on me.

“Drop it,” I told him firmly, without for one instant ceasing to bear my gaze straight down my pistol sight.

Out drawn, and out positioned, there wasn't that much for him to think about. Either he wanted to live or he wanted to die, that's really all he had to decide. The eyes said it all. He lowered his weapon. Once we had him in cuffs and sped off to our location, it hit me. At last, the murderous drug lord who had cost the life of one of our agents was finally in custody.

To this day, I credit Leo-tai's training as the one thing that most helped me keep the hair-trigger on my government-issued 9mm from engaging, and sending five or six black talon law enforcement rounds straight into their target – center mass.

What a crazy job this is, I remember thinking, as I sat down for a moment to let the energy subside. And as I did, my mind flashed back to a time when Leo-tai once described the Mental Warrior to me . . .

We were walking in the hills, he leading as usual, with that untiring pace that sometimes even I had trouble keeping up with . . . It was hot, and I enjoyed the breeze as we climbed higher and the humidity began to drop.

When we finally reached the top of the trail we stopped, rested, and admired the view as he told me what he had planned to tell me.

“Danielsan,” he said, “In order to become a Mental Warrior, you must learn to recognize the Mental Warrior; you must understand where the training takes you.”

He had my undivided attention.

This is what he told me: “Mental Warriors cannot be intimidated. Their self-confidence is too deeply rooted to be shakeable. They arrive on the scene to dominate. They love to compete; competing energizes them. They repel negative thoughts; they control their internal environment. They know how to remain focused under even the most challenging conditions.”

He told me: “Mental Warriors make it a point to be ready. They've learned to manage pressure; they never fail to keep moving forward. They refuse to lose, they'll never quit, and they will patiently work to find a solution, to find a way to win. Mental Warriors cannot accept not trying.”

Leo-tai went on: “Mental Warriors are goal oriented. They know what they want to do and set out to achieve it. Their dreams and goals motivate them to excel. They are dedicated. They know how to control their emotions so as to not allow them to sabotage their own performance. Mental Warriors never lose their composure and self-control in the heat of battle.”

“Most of all, Mental Warriors are brave, Danielsan, they have heart. They have the courage and inner strength to achieve their full potential. They understand the power of imagination, concentration, and consistency.”

He closed his lesson that day by reminding me that the only way that one could ever become a Mental Warrior was by practicing what the Art teaches.

Remember: One must practice in order to become.